

Cárdenas (Gomez)
Carter (TX)
Calvert
Cohen (Beyer)
DeFazio (Davids)
(KS)
Fudge (Kaptur)
Grijalva (Garcia)
(IL)
Haaland (Davids)
(KS)
Hastings
(Wasserman
Schultz)
Johnson (TX)
(Jeffries)
Kirkpatrick
(Stanton)
Langevin
(Lynch)

Lawson (FL)
(Evans)
Lee (NV)
(Kuster)
Lieu (Beyer)
Lofgren (Jeffries)
Lowenthal
(Beyer)
McEachin
(Wexton)
McHenry (Banks)
Meng (Clark)
(MA)
Moore (WI)
(Beyer)
Morelle (Tonko)
Moulton (Rice)
(NY)
Napolitano
(Correa)

Payne
(Wasserman
Schultz)
Pingree (Kuster)
Porter (Wexton)
Roybal-Allard
(Leger
Fernandez)
Ruiz (Agullar)
Rush
(Underwood)
Steube
(Franklin, C.
Scott)
Strickland
(DelBene)
Thompson (MS)
(Butterfield)
Watson Coleman
(Pallone)
Wilson (FL)
(Hayes)

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VETERANS' AND CAREGIVERS' COVID-19 IMMUNIZATIONS NOW EXPANDED ACT OF 2021

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 1276) to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish COVID-19 vaccines to certain individuals, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1276

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans' and Caregivers' COVID-19 Immunizations Now Expanded Act of 2021" or the "VA VACCINE Act of 2021".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO FURNISH COVID-19 VACCINES TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may furnish a COVID-19 vaccine to a covered individual during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(b) VACCINES FURNISHED ABROAD.—In the case of an individual who is a covered individual by reason of subsection (d)(1)(B), the Secretary may furnish a COVID-19 vaccine to such individual under subsection (a) regardless of whether the Secretary determines that such vaccine is needed for the treatment of a service-connected disability of the veteran or as part of a rehabilitation program under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) ENROLLED VETERAN PRIORITY.—In furnishing COVID-19 vaccines, the Secretary shall—

(1) prioritize the vaccination of veterans who are enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, over the vaccination of covered individuals under this section; and

(2) only furnish such vaccines to covered individuals under this section to the extent that such vaccines are available.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "covered individual" means any of the following:

(A) A veteran who is not eligible to enroll in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) A veteran who is eligible for care under section 1724 of such title.

(C) A family caregiver of an eligible veteran participating in the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under section 1720G(a) of such title.

(D) A caregiver of a covered veteran participating in the program of general caregiver support services under section 1720G(b) of such title.

(E) A caregiver of a veteran participating in the Medical Foster Home Program, Bowel and Bladder Program, Home Based Primary Care Program, or Veteran Directed Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) The term "COVID-19" means the coronavirus disease 2019.

(3) The term "COVID-19 public health emergency" means the public health emergency declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services on January 27, 2020, with respect to the coronavirus disease 2019.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. TAKANO

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Strike all after section 1 and insert the following:

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO FURNISH COVID-19 VACCINES TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may furnish a COVID-19 vaccine to a covered individual during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

(b) VACCINES FURNISHED ABROAD.—In the case of an individual who is a covered individual by reason of subsection (d)(2)(B), the Secretary may furnish a COVID-19 vaccine, in a geographic location other than a State, to such individual under subsection (a) regardless of whether the Secretary determines that such vaccine is needed for the treatment of a service-connected disability of the veteran or as part of a rehabilitation program under chapter 31 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) VETERAN AND ACCOMPANYING CAREGIVER PRIORITY.—In furnishing COVID-19 vaccines, the Secretary shall—

(1) prioritize the vaccination of veterans who are enrolled in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, veterans who fail to so enroll but receive hospital care and medical services pursuant to subsection (c)(2) of such section, and accompanying caregivers over the vaccination of covered individuals under this section not otherwise described in this paragraph; and

(2) only furnish such vaccines to covered individuals under this section to the extent that such vaccines are available.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term "accompanying caregiver" means a caregiver described in subparagraph (C), (D), or (E) of paragraph (2) who is accompanying a veteran as described in subsection (c)(1).

(2) The term "covered individual" means any of the following:

(A) A veteran who is not eligible to enroll in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(B) A veteran who is eligible for care under section 1724 of such title.

(C) A family caregiver who is approved as a provider of personal care services for an eligible veteran under the program of com-

prehensive assistance for family caregivers under section 1720G(a) of such title.

(D) A caregiver of a covered veteran participating in the program of general caregiver support services under section 1720G(b) of such title.

(E) A caregiver of a veteran participating in the Medical Foster Home Program, Bowel and Bladder Program, Home Based Primary Care Program, or Veteran Directed Care Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) The term "COVID-19" means the Coronavirus disease 2019.

(4) The term "COVID-19 public health emergency" means the public health emergency declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services on January 27, 2020, with respect to the Coronavirus disease 2019.

(5) The term "State" has the meaning given that term section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

Mr. TAKANO (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The amendment was agreed to.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JONES). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment pursuant to section 4(d) of House Resolution 8, 117th Congress, as amended by section 18 of House Resolution 188, 117th Congress, and the order of the House of January 4, 2021, of the following Members to the Select Committee on the Climate Crisis:

Mr. PALMER, Alabama
Mr. CARTER, Georgia
Mrs. MILLER, West Virginia
Mr. ARMSTRONG, North Dakota
Mr. CRENSHAW, Texas
Mr. GONZALEZ, Ohio

TEXANS NEED TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT TO SAVE LIVES

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, over 500,000 dead; 44,000 or more dead in the State of Texas.

The State of Texas, throughout the entire pandemic, remained one of the top hot spots of the Nation. They started testing late. We started vaccines and still have not reached a certain percentage, but yet, tomorrow, on March 10, 2021, our Governor has announced that there will be no mask mandate, and there will be no restrictions on any form of entertainment, restaurants, any large gatherings.

Tomorrow, March 10, the people of Texas get a death notice. I am asking my friends in Texas to wear your masks, socially distance, wash your

hands. We are vaccinating as fast as we can, but I am letting you know that Texas has all five of the variants of COVID-19. They have long-haulers in Texas, people who have continued to have COVID-19.

To save lives, I am asking my fellow Texans—as I know President Bush always used to call us, his “fellow Texans”—to wear your masks, wash your hands, socially distance to save lives.

Let's ignore wrong-headed advice and do what is right to save lives.

HONORING KERRY MCDANIEL

(Mr. GUTHRIE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, sadly, Kerry McDaniel passed away in February at just 65 years of age from COVID-19 complications.

Kerry was described as “can't be replaced,” “top-notch in every regard,” and “an exemplary model of generosity and selflessness.”

Kerry loved serving his community and did so in various positions throughout the years. For almost three decades, Kerry worked for the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, and most recently, he was the Hart County Emergency Management Director and Solid Waste Coordinator.

As a frontline responder, he worked hard to obtain personal protective equipment and protect Hart County from COVID-19. Throughout the county, Kerry was known for his service and generosity to others.

Kerry is survived by his dear wife, Vicki; his son, Curtis; his daughter-in-law, Tara; his grandson, Briar Allen, and many other family members he loved so dearly.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have known Kerry; he was an exemplary citizen. Kerry was a great friend, and he will be missed by all who knew him.

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AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN WILL MAKE ECONOMY STRONGER

(Mr. CASTEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASTEN. Mr. Speaker, for the one in eight Americans who will go to bed hungry tonight; for the 60 million Americans out of work and the 40 million who fear they might be evicted tomorrow; for the 2.3 million women, a million mothers, who have left the workforce, the American Rescue Plan is for you.

It will put money directly in your pockets; expand access to affordable healthcare and childcare; extend unemployment insurance and housing and nutrition assistance; and support 27 million children with an expanded child tax credit.

Mr. Speaker, for the 1.4 million public-sector employees who are out of

work—our firefighters, our teachers, our frontline public health workers, our first responders—we are going to provide \$350 billion for States and localities, including \$13.7 billion for my State of Illinois, to get you back to work, too.

We can't fix everything. 524,000 American lives lost to COVID are never coming back. But tomorrow, when we vote to pass the American Rescue Plan, we will honor their memory. We will make things a little easier for their loved ones. We will get their kids back in school safely, their family businesses back in the black, cut child poverty in half, create 4 million new jobs.

Most importantly, we will emerge from this crisis with an economy that is stronger, more equitable, and poised for growth for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all of my colleagues in the House and Senate who made this possible. Let's get this done.

PRO ACT MUST HAVE EXEMPTIONS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am from California, and almost 2 years ago, the State passed a bill known as AB-5, where all workers would be presumed as employees unless the worker can show that they satisfy all three prongs of what is known as the ABC test.

It went into effect in January 2020, and it had quite a few exemptions in it—barbers, musicians, translators, home inspectors, golf caddies, things like that. But after the bill passed, flaws were found in it. They had to go back and legislate again to add newspapers. They had to go back and extend the time for others for when it would kick in.

So, what is happening? Here in this House, we are on H.R. 842. Now, I had an amendment that would provide for some of those exemptions. This provides for zero exemptions for this requirement that all would be presumed as employees.

We are going to go ahead and do actually worse than the State of California, passing the PRO Act without the exemptions.

Government should be here to foster economic growth, not restrict it. The PRO Act would kill growth, squash innovation in the gig economy and the American economy.

Why are we going backward here when we can learn from California's mistake?

SUPPORTING WORKERS BY SUPPORTING UNIONS

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sup-

port of our Nation's greatest asset, our workers, our essential workers—nurses, teachers, mail carriers, transportation, sanitation, and food industry workers, among so many others—who have lifted the Nation with their sacrifice and bravery.

Just as they have supported us, we must support them by supporting unions. Attacks on unions, and a series of significant actions by the former administration, have weakened worker protections and, in turn, destroyed the middle class.

That is why I was proud to just vote to pass the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, the most significant upgrade for workers' collective bargaining rights in more than 80 years.

If we are to fully recover from this deadly pandemic and build back better, we must invest in and protect the rights of our workers to unionize. American workers and their families are depending on us.

ENTREPRENEURS WILL BE HARMED BY PRO ACT

(Mr. OBERNOLTE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OBERNOLTE. Mr. Speaker, I fear that H.R. 842 is going to have serious long-term consequences for entrepreneurialism here in America.

Mr. Speaker, I started a company 30 years ago out of my college dorm room at Caltech, and I grew it the way that most small businesses are grown in America. I grew it organically. That means that when I had a little bit more business than I, myself, could do, I contracted that business out to other people who could do that business for me.

Mr. Speaker, under this bill, that practice will be illegal because it violates the so-called B pillar of the bill that prohibits any contracting that is related to the core business that a company engages.

Mr. Speaker, if H.R. 842 had been the law of the land, I would not have been able to start my company, and the hundreds of jobs that we have created would not have been created here. But they will be created elsewhere, in other countries, with more sane and less restrictive laws.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a “no” vote on H.R. 842.

GETTING BACK ON TRACK WITH AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago, almost to this very day, is the day when COVID-19 was officially declared a pandemic. One year ago, we didn't know that this pandemic would infect millions of Americans or kill thousands of Texans in my home State and hurt so many disadvantaged communities.

But after a year of darkness, we are finally seeing the light because the